

**WILLIAM ROCKHILL
NELSON GALLERY OF
ART and MARY ATKINS
MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS**

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GALLERY NEWS

THE WILLIAM ROCKHILL NELSON TRUST

THE UNIVERSITY TRUSTEES

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LECTURES AND GALLERY GUIDANCE

Information concerning scheduled lectures for the month will be found in the following pages. Special talks for groups may be arranged by appointment. Services of a guide may be secured at a fee of twenty cents per person, with a minimum fee of one dollar for an hour's tour. Due to limited personnel at the present time, arrangements should be made in advance.

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

Information about enrollment for Saturday and Summer Classes may be obtained from the Director of Junior Education. Saturday afternoon activities especially for children are listed in the calendar.

PUBLICATIONS

Catalogues, handbooks, photographs, postcards, etc., are for sale at the Information Desk to the left of the North Entrance. This News Letter is published once each month, September through June, plus a Summer Issue, and is distributed without charge.

See back page for further information.

GALLERY NEWS
August-September, 1944

EXHIBITION OF ARMS AND ARMOUR: Opening on August 13, the central loan gallery will exhibit guns from the collections of four Kansas City gun fanciers: Mr. M. W. Pehl, Mr. Willard F. Field, Mr. Lawrence McMurdo and Mr. Charles Kinney. Displayed with the guns as background material will be paintings and prints of warriors and battle scenes, armour and weapons from the permanent collection.

The art of the armourer is an ancient one and that of the gunsmith, while not so ancient, is equally honored among the metal crafts. The invention and use of firearms in Europe was, of course, dependent upon the introduction of gunpowder in the early 14th century. It appears well established that gunpowder was invented in China and used there for firewords as early as the 7th century. It was later used in firearms by the Arabs and in cannon by Ghengis Khan in the 13th century. Bacon and the German monk, Schwartz, have also been credited with the invention of gunpowder but however that may be, it is believed that Schwartz did conceive the idea of the gun as we know it, in the early 14th century. It seems that the Chinese had used gunpowder in warfare only for its noise-making properties!

The earliest "gonne" consisted of a simple iron or brass tube with a touch-hole at the top, fixed in a straight stock of wood. The fire was done by means of a cotton or hemp wick which had been soaked in salt-petre or lees of wine. The exhibition will show the various improvements and additions from the match-lock of the 15th century to the six-shooter of our own frontier days. Among the interesting early examples are a 17th century East Indian match-lock from the collection of Mr. Pehl and a pair of Anglo-Saxon wheellocks, dating around 1500, lent by Mr. McMurdo.

From the standpoint of the art museum, perhaps

the greatest interest lies in the ornamentation and fine handwork - the inlaid stocks and applied silver work - but equally fascinating is the human story called to the imagination by the small English coaching pistol of the blunderbuss type, with its lethal looking little bayonet, or the Valley Forge flint-locks used at the Battle of Lexington.

For the armour group, Mr. Pehl has lent an extremely rare item, a complete shirt of chain mail, with the silver cross of the Crusades woven into the breast. Chain mail, made up of thousands of small iron rings, dates back as far as the 10th century and was in use as late as the 14th, when it was gradually replaced by plate armour. This latter will be represented by the fine Italian and German Renaissance suits from the Gallery collection and the "Portrait of Admiral Contarini" by Tintoretto which shows that great seaman attired in the brilliant dress armour of the day. Also rare is the complete suit of Chinese armour, with its fine gold ornamentation and flexible steel laminations. Few of these have survived and there is, as far as we know, only one other example in American collections.

For the "investigating" mind, we suggest a Gallery exploration for examples of arms and armour not included in the loan show. They will be found on Greek vases in the Classical section, where Athena may be seen presiding over a dispute between Ajax and Odysseus for the armour of Achilles; in Galleries 3 and 6 paintings of the Renaissance and earlier contain interesting specimens in some detail; the Oriental Department offers a number of interesting examples, particularly the bronze chariot fittings from the Shang Dynasty of ancient China; and in the American Indian section, the

primitive weapons and shields of Pre-Columbian America may be found.

TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS:

Gallery 2: European Drawings: Masterpieces of European drawings from the permanent collection will be shown in Gallery 2 for a period of six weeks. To many of us, drawings by the masters of art have an intimacy and charm we cannot feel when confronted by the sometimes overwhelming triumphs of the finished painting. Here one finds the sketches of the moment's inspiration which have been stored for possible future use. Here, too, are the conscious experiments, plans and studies in projecting the grander work where, as Goethe said, "they give in its purity the mental intention of the artist...because they bring immediately before us the mood of his mind at the moment of creation" In this exhibition the fascinating pastime of watching the workings of an artist's mind can be enjoyed in such drawings as Ingres' "Sheet of Studies for the Martyrdom of St. Symphorien" and Gericault's "Study of a Nude Man".

Many artists used drawings not only for preparatory work but as an end in itself and probably no medium exacts such sureness of composition and cleanness of line. Claude Lorrain's "View of the Tiber at Rome", Van Dyck's "Knight on Horseback" and others show the sound sense of draughtsmanship which underlies every great technique, and give an opportunity of an interesting comparison of styles.

Gallery 19: French Painting: During August and the first two weeks of September, we are again privileged to show those 19th and 20th century French paintings that have been lent to the Gallery by private collectors and museums in this country. Also included in this exhibition are selections from the group of French paintings which came originally to America for

the 1939 San Francisco Fair and which have been entrusted to the Gallery by our government for the period of the war. Many of the finest artists of France are represented: Cezanne, Braque, Rouault, Bonnard, Soutine, Lhote and many others. In their work, from the solid landscapes of Cezanne to the brilliant and savage figures of Rouault, can be seen the individuality of technique and the independence of thought that has made modern French painting one of the foremost art expressions of our time

Gallery 14: During the month of September, there will be exhibited in this room a group of Chinese wood block prints from the two well-known manuals for Chinese painters, the "Ten Bamboo Hall" and the "Mustard Seed Garden". The blocks for these books were cut during the 17th and 18th centuries and the prints, which are done in full color, through their beauty of design and skillful printing, have won recognition among Chinese and foreign collectors. The "Ten Bamboo Hall" consists of sixteen volumes, with sections reproducing compositions of birds, orchids, bamboo, flowers, fruit and designs for fans. The "Mustard Seed Garden" is in four parts with subject matter from ancient paintings, flowers, birds and insects and human figures. The Gallery has a large collection of prints including a very remarkable and quite complete second edition of the "Ten Bamboo Hall" and an exceptionally fine and rare first edition on Korean paper of the second part of the "Mustard Seed Garden".

Gallery 26: When the Chinese textiles in Gallery 26 are changed the first of September, one of the focal points of the new show will be a red satin hanging, recently presented to the Museum by Mr. Dan Casement of Manhattan, Kansas. It is a large piece, twelve by six feet, embroidered with Taoist deities, Shou Lao, the God of Longevity;

Hsi Wang Mu, the Queen Mother of the West; and the Eight Immortals, who stand nonchalantly on billowing waves. It was made during the Tao Kuang Period (1821-1850) and was brought to this country in the early part of the twentieth century. Now it becomes a part of the Gallery collection, in memory of Olivia Casement.

GIFT OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN PAINTINGS:

Two important additions to the collection of American painting are due to the generosity of the Westport Fund, through its Trustees, Mr and Mrs Milton W McGreevy and Mr. T.M. James. The earlier of the two, "Portrait of a Boy" by Maurice Prendergast, represents a period which is extremely important in the development of 20th century American painting, the second decade. It was then that "The Eight" was formed, a group of younger men who sought independence of juries and academies; the Armory show was held; and the modern movements of France gained influence. Prendergast is an individualist who associated himself with the ideas and philosophies of the group, but whose work stems from the Impressionist movement in the method of using divided color, but it is distinctly his own in application.

Franklin Watkins' canvas, "The Blue Chair" brings a new name to the growing roster of contemporary painters. His is a fluid, easy style, with subtle color which makes the unusual out of the commonplace - a blue kitchen chair and a careless mass of wildflowers in a watering can. Watkins was winner of the first prize in the Carnegie International of 1931 with his celebrated "Suicide in Costume" and is widely represented in American public and private collections. It is a pleasure to welcome one of his works to the Gallery collection.

SERVICE LOUNGE: Thanks are in order to several organizations for the splendid help which they have rendered the Staff in connection with the mezzanine lounge for service people. First,

to Service for America for the beautiful new slip covers, chair cushions, tables and lamps which have added so much to the cheerfulness and beauty of the room; second, to Abbott Laboratories for turning over the proceeds from the sale of catalogues and reproductions of the Naval Aviation Exhibition, which will be used to repair the radio and phonograph for that room and buy records; third to the ladies of the Hyde Park Christian Church who for more than a year supplied and prepared the Sunday refreshments. During the summer months the Gallery Staff and their friends are supplying these Sunday refreshments, but hope that beginning in the Fall it may be possible to find a new "angel" - this might be considered in the nature of a hint!

DEPARTMENT OF JUNIOR EDUCATION: After a most successful season, Summer classes for children closed on July 22nd with a morning program reviewing the term's work, a picnic and sketching period at noon, and a marionette play "Saint George and the Dragon" in the afternoon, to which parents and friends were invited. Work from the various classes is on display in the Little Museum.

Two new watercolour classes were added to the regular schedule. One, in which the students worked in gouache, was taught by Rifka Angel and was for children only. The other came as a result of requests for something for adults "who can't draw but would like to try" and produced some most interesting results under the direction of Mrs. Mildred Gibbon.

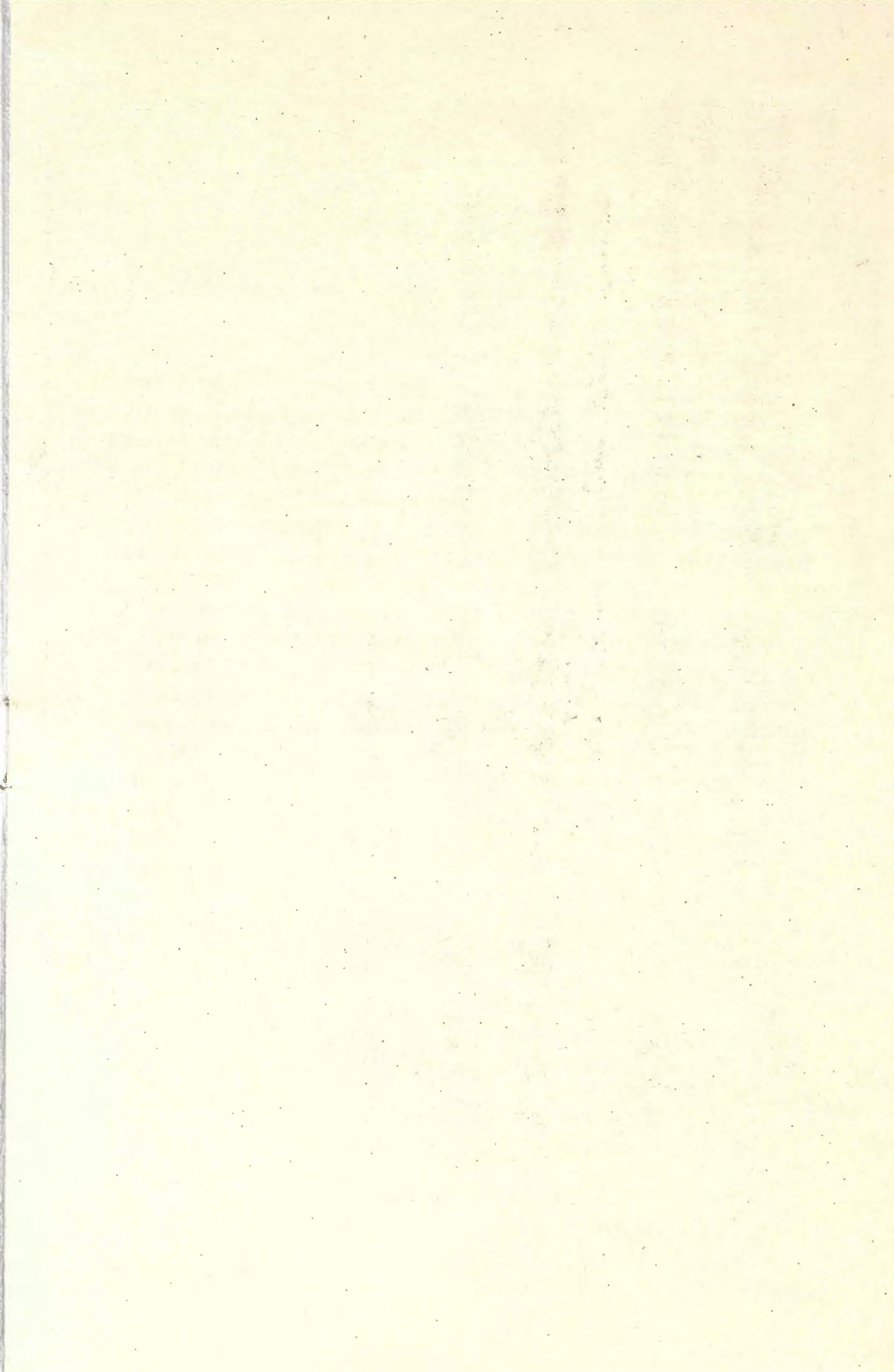
Extension classes were conducted at the George Washington Carver Settlement House and the Niles Orphan Home. Groups from Guadalupe, the Spofford Home and Humboldt School came to the Gallery for classes

arranged especially for them. Exhibits, principally of the work of Julie Fields and Joseph Bostich, Gallery students, were lent to the Carver Settlement House.

An important feature of the summer work was the Chinese project centering around the Chinese Fair to be held in the loan galleries in October and November. For this the children have constructed a Chinese compound and painted street signs. Paintings, sculpture and other objects made by the children will be for sale in the Chinese shops at the Fair, the proceeds to go to Service for America as a contribution from the children.

An art library for children has been opened in cooperation with the Public Library. It is located in A Annex. At present there are over one hundred volumes concerning art, artists and the various countries from which our art comes. It is hoped that more books can be added later. They are available during class periods and can be taken home by Gallery students.

Registration for winter classes for children will be on October 14th, with announcement of specific courses to be made later. We regret that registrations cannot be taken in advance of that date. It is hoped that the adult class may be continued. If you are interested, please call for information.



THE LIBRARY

The Library is open to the public by appointment for study purposes. Volumes are not circulated.

SERVICE LOUNGE

A special lounge is maintained for men and women in the armed forces. Books, magazines, and a piano are available. Light refreshments are served on Sunday afternoon. There is no admission charge at any time for people in uniform.

GIFTS TO THE COLLECTION

The greater part of all museum collections has been built up by individual gifts or bequests. Already hundreds of gifts from all over the United States have widened the scope of the Nelson Collection. The Trustees and Director will be pleased to discuss the acceptability of gifts or bequests with those desiring to contribute to the Collection. Gifts of or contributions for contemporary art are especially solicited and would constitute a most noteworthy memorial as the Nelson Funds can be used for purchase of works of art only when the artist has been dead at least thirty years. The Gallery will be glad to give information about the Society of Friends of Art which has been formed by interested patrons for the purpose of purchasing and presenting to the Collection, works by contemporary artists.

The financial cooperation of everyone for such activities as loan exhibitions, courses of lectures, the Library, musical programs, classes for children in art appreciation or the history of art or the peoples of the world as exemplified in the Gallery collections is an urgent need and the Director will be pleased to furnish detailed information.

The legal entity to which gifts should be made is: University Trustees of the William Rockhill Nelson Trust.

WILLIAM ROCKHILL NELSON GALLERY OF ART

ATKINS MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

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